



RE•NEWS



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FEATURE

"Dollars & Sense" Brownfields Trainings, September 20-21, Waunakee

A free training on brownfields and real estate transactions is being sponsored the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) and U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) on Thursday, September 21, at the Waunakee Village Center – the former Stokely USA brownfields property – in Waunakee, Wisconsin.



"Dollars & Sense: An Insider's Guide for Government Officials on Brownfields Real Estate Development" is available

for local, state and federal government officials as well as tribal members. Hear national experts share insider tips on transforming blighted properties into new, vital redevelopments in their communities. Participants will learn how developers assess the value of a brownfields project, as well as how they control risks, develop teams, obtain government approvals and finance projects.

“DOLLARS & SENSE” BROWNFIELDS TRAININGS, SEPTEMBER 20-21, WAUNAKEE (CON’T.)

BONUS! Financial Training Also Available September 20

On September 20, the DNR, Department of Commerce and EPA will also host a free half-day training entitled “Dollars & Sense: Show Me The Brownfields Money!”

The half-day training will be held in the afternoon at the Waunakee Village Center and is open to the public.

Participants may attend either the half-day financial training or the full-day real estate training, or both.

Registration and other conference information is available on the DNR’s web site at

http://dnr.wi.gov/org/aw/rr/rbrownfields/bfield_wshops/index.htm#dollars.

Brownfield Site Assessment Grants Available to Investigate Contaminated Properties

State grants from the DNR are now available to help local governments with known or suspected contaminated properties in their communities.

The DNR’s Brownfield Site Assessment Grant (SAG) program has \$1.7 million available to help municipalities jump start investigation activities at brownfields, which are abandoned, idle or underused industrial or commercial properties where redevelopment is hindered by real or perceived contamination.

“These grants have had a positive effect all across Wisconsin,” said Mark Giesfeldt, bureau director for the DNR’s Remediation and Redevelopment (RR) Program. “That’s because SAGs are geared toward helping both urban and rural communities with their brownfield redevelopment projects.”

During the last round of grants, Giesfeldt noted, nearly half of the awards were to rural communities or counties, and approximately one-third of the grants went to communities with populations fewer than 5,000 people.

Applications for both large and small grants are due November 1, 2006.

Applications and instructions for the SAG program are available on line at <http://dnr.wi.gov/org/aw/rr/rbrownfields/sag.htm>. Of the \$1.7 million in available funding, \$1.02 million is allocated for small grants and \$680,000 is allocated for large grants. Small grants range from \$2,000 up to \$30,000 and large grants range from \$30,000 up to \$100,000.

Any local government (city, village, town, county, redevelopment authority, community development authority, or housing authority) or tribe is eligible to complete an application for a grant. While the SAG does not fund cleanup activities, it does fund the following:



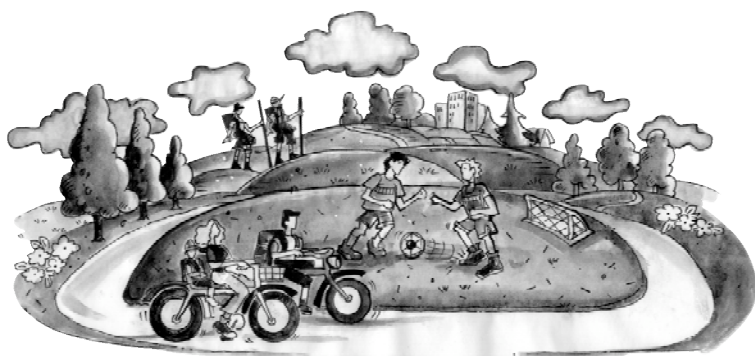
BROWNFIELD SITE ASSESSMENT GRANTS AVAILABLE TO INVESTIGATE CONTAMINATED PROPERTIES (CON'T.)

- Phase I Environmental Site Assessments;
- Phase II Environmental Site Assessments;
- site investigations;
- demolition;
- asbestos removal associated with demolition;
- removal of abandoned containers; and
- removal of underground storage tanks (USTs).

Since 2000, the DNR has awarded \$9.9 million in 307 grants to 150 communities around the state for work on 900 acres of land. The State Legislature first authorized \$1.45 million for the SAG program in 1999 after the Brownfields Study Group, a state-wide advisory task force, recommended the program in their 1998 final report.

For more information about the Site Assessment Grant program, including handy tips on whether a property is eligible for a SAG, please visit the RR SAG web site at <http://dnr.wi.gov/org/aw/rr/rbrownfields/sag.htm>.

Green Space & Public Facilities Grants Still Available!



The DNR's Green Space and Public Facilities Grant Program has funding still available for Wisconsin communities.

To date, six cities have requested more than \$750,000 in Green Space grants for seven projects. Depending on the eligibility of those projects, there remains at least \$250,000 of the total \$1 million still available to fund other brownfield-to-greenspace projects.

Applications were due July 21, 2006, but with funding still available, the RR Program has decided to continue accepting applications. Applications will now be accepted until March 31, 2007, or until all funds are awarded.

This is a great opportunity for local governments and tribes to help with environmental cleanup needed before redeveloping brownfields into green spaces, recreation areas, libraries or other public uses. Any tribe or local government – city, village, town, county, redevelopment authority, community development authority or housing authority – is eligible to apply for a grant.

Applicants may request grants for up to \$200,000. The applicant must be ready, or almost ready, to enter the cleanup phase of their project. Investigation of contaminated areas is not covered by the grant program. Applicants must also be ready to commit to long-term public use of the property – however, public ownership is not required in order to apply for a grant.

The application, instructions, and a fact sheet are available on the RR Program's web site at: http://dnr.wi.gov/org/aw/rr/rbrownfields/greenspace_grant.htm. You can also check this web page to see the list of current applications and previous grant recipients.

For more information, please contact Michael Prager at 608-261-4927, or michael.prager@dnr.state.wi.us.

Progress For Milwaukee's 30th Street Corridor

Work continues on assessing contamination at brownfield properties in one of the state's most economically distressed areas.

Through a brownfields grant from EPA, the DNR, city of Milwaukee and the 30th Street Industrial Corridor Corporation (ICC) are using the funding to conduct brownfield site assessments along a five mile stretch of 30th Street on the north side of the city.

Focusing On 30th Street

With a long history of manufacturing and facing several contamination issues, the Corridor faces an uphill battle to restore its economic vitality. According to the most recent census, the neighborhood unemployment rate is 19 percent, and at least 15 percent of housing units are vacant. Ninety-seven percent of residents are considered minority, and 34 percent live in poverty.

The 30th Street group is not alone in their efforts to help the Corridor. In addition to local business and community support, the assessment and eventual cleanup and redevelopment of this area is also a key component in Governor Jim Doyle's Urban Reinvestment Initiative. The Initiative focuses on improving blighted urban neighborhoods, and represents the first step in a long-term commitment that includes identifying environmental contamination, conducting any necessary cleanups and supporting redevelopment that will benefit the community.

Brenna Holly, executive director for ICC, supports the effort. "Members of the ICC and the new Business Improvement District #37 are excited to be working with a number of partners to revitalize area brownfields," said Holly. "By working together, we want to restore the economic health and vitality of the area by creating new opportunities for employers, employees, and others who wish to make the Corridor their home."

Assessment Work Moving Quickly

Through this coalition, the DNR received \$400,000 in EPA brownfields funding to start the assessments in October 2005. Ten months later, substantial progress has been made in identifying which brownfields properties may or may not have contamination.

To identify potential areas for redevelopment, DNR, city and ICC officials decided to focus investigations of Corridor properties located south of North Avenue. Working primarily on tax-delinquent properties, consultants identified the likely potential for contamination by examining records and the properties through a Phase I Environmental Site Assessment (ESA) process. In May this year, work was completed on 15 Phase I ESA's.

The good news is, for twelve properties – or eighty percent of the total sites examined – the reports concluded that contamination is unlikely to be present. For the other three properties, consultants recommended collecting soil and groundwater samples to rule out contamination.

Another study will look at the impact of a past soil removal project on the quality of groundwater under adjacent properties in the Corridor. Also, one industrial building that is in poor condition contains hazardous materials. City and DNR officials contacted EPA to work with the owner and take action.

Next Steps

The EPA grant funding runs through 2007, and many properties still need to be assessed. State and city officials are planning to apply for more federal brownfields funding this fall, including requesting grant money to tackle the larger industrial properties in the Corridor.

Meanwhile the city will assemble properties to attract a developer or buyer. For more information about the condition of the properties, please contact Benjamin Timm with the city of Milwaukee at 414-286-5756, or Benjamin.Timm@mkdcd.org.

For more information about the brownfields site assessment effort in the Corridor, please contact Darsi Foss at 608-267-6713 or darsi.foss@dnr.state.wi.us. You can also follow new developments in the 30th Street Corridor by checking the RR Program's web site at: <http://dnr.wi.gov/org/aw/rr/rbrownfields/uri-30th-street.htm> (or please see "Tackling Milwaukee's 30th Street Brownfields First Step To Governor's Urban Initiative," page 2, *Re News*, December 2005).



An Insider's Look at the Web – New Demo & Asbestos Page!

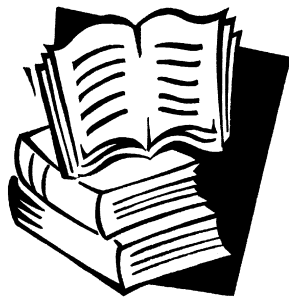
The RR Program is constantly updating our web site to provide you with accurate and useful information for the cleanup and reuse of contaminated properties. This includes creating new pages on “hot topics” that our users have requested, or providing web pages that will help the public better understand our program.



The newest RR Program tool is our “Demolition & Asbestos” web page. Between environmental remediation and new construction, there is often another step in brownfield redevelopment – demolition of deteriorated buildings. The information on this new page is intended to help you locate information about demolition and the management of asbestos. This page is particularly useful for applicants of the DNR’s Brownfield Site Assessment Grant Program (please see page 2 for more information).

The new web page is located at the following link: <http://dnr.wi.gov/org/aw/rr/rbrownfields/asbestos.htm>. If you have any questions about the page, or would like to submit ideas for other web pages, please contact Jessica Milz at jessica.milz@dnr.state.wi.us.

Stay tuned for more web information in upcoming *Re News*!



New, Revised Publications

New Drycleaner Bid Checklist Available

A new fact sheet is now available for anyone seeking reimbursement through the Dry Cleaner Environmental Response Fund (DERF). The *Remedial Action Bid Checklist* (publication RR-756) is now available and includes a handy series of steps for bidding out remedial actions to consultants. This one-page publication is available on the RR Program’s web site at the following link: <http://dnr.wi.gov/org/aw/rr/archives/pubs/RR756.pdf>.

Development at Historic Fill Sites Fact Sheet Revised

The fact sheet entitled *Development at Historic Fill Sites and Licensed Landfills: Guidance for Investigation* (publication RR-684) has been revised. This publication is one of three that provides helpful information for environmental professional working on the cleanup and redevelopment of historic fill sites. The publication is available at the following link: <http://dnr.wi.gov/org/aw/rr/archives/pubs/RR684.pdf>.

Fact Sheet For Environmental Liability Exemptions Updated

Fact Sheet 5, *Environmental Liability Exemptions for Lenders and Representatives* (publication RR-508), has recently been updated. The publication highlights some of the advantages for lenders and representatives when using the environmental liability exemption provided by the state for brownfields cleanups. The publication is available at the following link: <http://dnr.wi.gov/org/aw/rr/archives/pubs/RR508.pdf>.

Revised Fact Sheet On Negotiated Agreements Available

Negotiated Agreements, Contracts For Non-Emergency Remediation of Contaminated Properties (Fact Sheet 6, publication RR-664) has been revised. This publication provides information on why negotiated agreements are useful tools in brownfields redevelopment and how they can be utilized. This publication is available at the following link: <http://dnr.wi.gov/org/aw/rr/archives/pubs/RR664.pdf>.



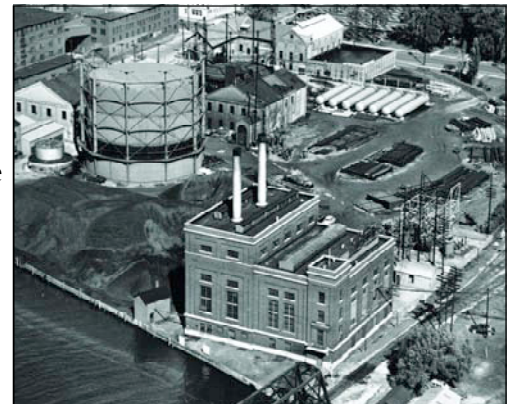
SUCCESS STORIES

Former Manufactured Gas Plant Becomes A Walk In The Park

Creating an inviting green space for recreation and designing an entertainment spotlight that draws residents and visitor alike, all from the remains of a former manufactured gas plant property, is one of the more creative brownfields success stories celebrated by the city of Oshkosh.

From Coal To Gas To Brownfield

From the mid-1800s until the middle of the last century, much of the gas for lights and heating in the United States was produced from facilities called “manufactured gas plants” (MGPs). At these plants, coal was turned into a gas through a process called coal gasification. Several byproducts of this process, however, were not only hazardous but were often dumped into the soil and water per the standard disposal methods at that time. These disposal methods created contamination issues, many of which still exist to this day.



The former Wisconsin Public Service Site, circa 1953 (photo courtesy city of Oshkosh).



The new Riverside Park and Leach Amphitheater, during the opening night of Oshkosh's WaterFest (photo courtesy city of Oshkosh).

The Oshkosh plant, located along the Fox River just before it empties into Lake Winnebago, was constructed in the 1870s and was operated by Oshkosh Gas & Light Company, which eventually became part of Wisconsin Public Service (WPS). This eight-acre site consisted of several coal gasification structures, including a gas purifier and boiler house, a coke house, two gas holders, four tar wells, coal storage areas and oil tanks. In addition, a portion of the property also housed other businesses during that time, including a furniture factory, lumber storage facility and railroad.

Over time, the site became under-utilized and contaminated. One of the byproducts from this plant – coal tar – contaminated the soil and groundwater at the facility. After investigation, WPS began cleanup of the site in 2002. The cleanup included demolition of buildings, disposal of 4,000 tons of debris, excavation of underground gas holders and contaminated soils, and thermally treating nearly 24,000 tons of material and redistributing that material onto the site.

A groundwater trench recovery system was also constructed to control groundwater flow and pump contaminated water to the city's sanitary system for treatment. Workers constructed a cap on the surface of the site to protect the area and the recovery system from precipitation and stormwater runoff.

A Green Space Vision

With its prime location along the river, city officials were eager to incorporate the site into their broader waterfront revitalization plans. In 2003, city officials purchased the property and began putting together a diverse redevelopment package. The city leveraged more than \$4 million in public and private donations to make this brownfield redevelopment possible.

Funding included a \$200,000 DNR Green Space and Public Facilities. Grant to help develop the area into a riverwalk, park, amphitheater and performance pavilion. The DNR's Green Space Grant Program is one of the only programs in the nation specifically geared toward turning brownfields into green spaces and public facilities. (please see page 3 for more information).

Other funding sources included:

- \$200,000 EPA Brownfield Cleanup Grant;
- \$59,895 EPA Brownfield Site Assessment Grant; and
- \$25,000 Community Development Block Grant (CDBG).

In addition to the park and amphitheater, the city's future plans include building parallel floating docks along a portion of the riverwalk. The city has already hosted several festivals and events at the site, providing an important attraction to the downtown area and helping boost the economic appeal of Oshkosh's riverfront.

Staff Updates

Northeast Region

Vickie Wall has recently joined the RR Program's Northeast Regional staff in Green Bay reviewing case files associated with Department of Transportation projects. Vickie previously worked with the Illinois EPA in the Site Remediation and LUST programs, and also managed the Manitowoc County Recycling Facility. Welcome Vickie!



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For More Information: *Re News* is published quarterly by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources Bureau for Remediation and Redevelopment.

This newsletter is available in alternate format upon request. Please call 608-267-3543.

Our Web Site Is : <http://www.dnr.wi.gov/org/aw/rtr>

Refer comments and questions to :

Bureau For Remediation & Redevelopment
Wisconsin DNR
P.O. Box 7921
Madison, WI 53707 608-261-6422

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This newsletter may contain summary information about certain state statutes and/or rules and does not include all of the details found in the statutes/rules. Readers should consult the actual language of the statutes/rules to answer specific questions.

Department of Natural Resources
Bureau for Remediation and Redevelopment, RR/3
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Madison, WI 53707

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